

amendment, Claims 10 – 12, and 15-17 remain pending and rejected in view of the Office Action dated November 30, 2001. Claim 10 has been amended, and claims 13 and 14 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter contained therein. Support for the amendments may be found, for example, at page 11, line 18-21, of the instant specification. Applicants submit that no new subject matter has been added by the claim amendments. Reconsideration of the present application in view of the following remarks is respectfully request.

I. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

The pending claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 (b) as being anticipated by Stover (US 5,208,098). In view of the claim amendments, applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

It was stated in the Office Action that Stover discloses a self-bonded nonwoven web and porous film composite comprising at least one layer of a self-bonded, fibrous nonwoven web comprising substantially continuous filaments adhered to at least one layer of a polymeric porous film and having vapor-permeable and liquid impermeable properties. It is further stated that the reference teaches that the web comprises a thermoplastic selected from the group consisting of polypropylene and polyester among others, and that the reference further discloses that the polymeric films can be prepared from any suitable film-forming polymeric composition, such as polyolefins, polyamides, polyesters and the like.

Applicants assert that Stover does not disclose or anticipate a laminate of a porous polymeric layer comprising porous polytetrafluorethylene adhered to at least one woven, non-woven or knit fabric, in which the laminate has an air permeability of between 10 and 100 m<sup>3</sup>/m<sup>2</sup>/hour at 200 Pa pressure difference, a water entry pressure greater than 20 kPa, an Ret less than 15 m<sup>2</sup>Pa/W; and in which the porous polymeric layer has an average pore size of between 0.2 and 10  $\mu$ m. Likewise, Stover does not anticipate the features of dependent claims 11-12, and 15-17.

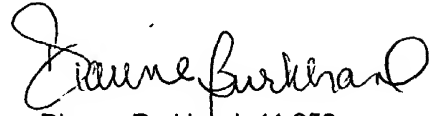
Thus, applicants respectfully submit that the claimed invention is not anticipated by the cited art relied upon by the Patent Office, and applicants request that the §102(b) rejection be withdrawn.

II. Conclusion

In view of the amendments to the claims and the foregoing comments, the present invention as defined by claims 10-12, and 15-17 is not disclosed by the cited document. Accordingly, applicants respectfully submits that these claims

are now in form for allowance. If further questions remain, applicants requests that the Examiner telephone the undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dianne Burkhard".

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Enclosure: Clean Copy of Amended Claim



Clean version of Amended Claim

10. A cover for the aerobic treatment of biodegradable material, which comprises a laminate of
- a) a porous polymeric layer comprising porous polytetrafluorethylene adhered to
  - b) at least one woven, non-woven or knit fabric, in which the laminate has
    - iv) an air permeability of between 10 and 100 m<sup>3</sup>/m<sup>2</sup>/hour at 200 Pa pressure difference,
    - v) a water entry pressure greater than 20 kPa,
    - vi) an Ret less than 15 m<sup>2</sup>Pa/W;
- and in which the porous polymeric layer has an average pore size of between 0.2 and 10  $\mu$ m.

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